



## A Message From The Secretary

Every year during the first week of April we have an opportunity to reflect on the importance of public health in Kansas as we celebrate National Public Health Week. As we look back over the past 100 years, life expectancy in the United States has increased tremendously from 46 years to 78 years of age. While there are many reasons including improved medical technology and increased medical knowledge, this improvement is largely attributed to the promotion of and advances in public health, which is strongly rooted in Kansas history.

Dr. Samuel Crumbine, known across the globe as the “father of public health,” began his crusade for improvement in public health in Kansas. He was named the Secretary of the Kansas Board of Health in 1904. Over the course of his career, he campaigned against the public drinking cup to reduce incidence of Tuberculosis; offered a bounty for the common house fly; and used cartoons and a traveling rail car to spread his messages of health. His efforts live on today in the effective, dedicated work of all public health staff in the state.

Today, KDHE, along with national and local public health organizations are preparing for the possibility of pandemic flu and ways to minimize its impact on Kansans. In fact, KDHE will be conducting several summits starting in late April and continuing through May targeting schools, businesses, industry, faith-based organizations, and policy makers. Educational materials are being developed for the public, health care workers, and schools, and information will continue to be provided regularly to the media and through our Web site at [www.kdheks.gov](http://www.kdheks.gov). We encourage everyone to review the checklists available at [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov) to help ensure we have all taken the necessary steps to be better prepared for a pandemic as individuals, employees, and neighbors.

This month we celebrate Earth Day 2006 at the Statehouse on April 21 encouraging Kansans to recycle and take actions to preserve our beautiful state. KDHE recently recognized three Kansans for their contributions to this effort during the 12th annual Works! Conference in Great Bend. Stan Slaughter (the traveling eco-troubador), Mike Tabor (Seward County), and Dr. Jim Triplett (Pittsburg) were inducted into the Solid Waste Hall of Fame for their many years of service in improving the environment. Bill Ridge (McPherson) and Jo Sanders (Wichita) were recognized for their leadership in waste management and environmental stewardship. Congratulations to these individuals for their hard work!

Later this month, KDHE will recognize the contributions of 13 students from across the state whose artwork promotes keeping Kansas beautiful. They will be featured in the 2007 ‘Kansas Don’t Spoil It!’ calendars available to the public this fall. And a new and exciting aspect of KDHE’s ‘Get Caught Recycling’ campaign will be announced April 21 to encourage all Kansans to get involved in making our state a safer, healthier place to live. We encourage you to get involved and watch for more information available at [www.getcaughtrecycling.org](http://www.getcaughtrecycling.org).

Be Well,